

CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY

Council of the Faculty of Engineering and Computer Science

Minutes of Meeting 2004-01

held

Friday, January 23, 2004, 2:00 p.m., H-769

Present:	N. Esmail (Chair)	I. Hassan	C. Paradisis
	M.O. Ahmad	S.V. Hoa	O.A. Pekau
	D. Chen	N. Howe	H.B. Poorooshasb
	J. Daigle	R. Jaradeh	M.D. Pugh
	K. Demirli	C. Lam	T. Radhakrishnan
	M. Di Pietrantonio (Sec)	B. Mackenzie	Y.R. Shayan
	R. Dssouli	M.K. Mehmet Ali	N. Shiri-Varnaamkhaasti
	T. Fancott	O. Moselhi	C.W. Trueman
	A.M. Hanna	J. Opatrny	G.H. Vatistas
	L. Harris	G. Papadakis	R.G. Zmeureanu

Observers: S. Ghaderpanah L. Zack

Regrets:	N. Benjamin	R. Mizouni	M. Ren
	H.F. Li	T. Nalbandian	S.A. Shimmy
	F. Khendek	L. Quesnel	C.Y. Su
	W.E. Lynch		

1. Adoption of Agenda

Motion That the Agenda be adopted, as submitted (M.O. Ahmad, R. Dssouli)

2004-01-01

Vote: Carried unanimously

2. Adoption of the Minutes of Meeting 2003-07

Motion That the Minutes of Meetings 2003-07 (November 21, 2003) be adopted,
as submitted (S.V. Hoa, R. Dssouli)

2004-01-02

Vote: Carried unanimously

3. Chair's Remarks

Enrollment

The Chair advised that the unweighted FTE's for this year increased from 4100 to 4200, as compared to last year. This increment of 100 provides a good indication that the Faculty is able to achieve and sustain a level of enrollment within its optimal corridor of operation (which has been pre-set between 3600 to 4200), without any effort to increase enrollment figures. The Chair remarked that although a 'natural' growth has occurred, it represents the lowest growth in the last 5 years. According to the Chair, regardless of uncontrollable factors including deviations in students' interest in engineering programs, social, industrial and economic markets, a corridor of 600 FTE's will allow the Faculty to operate in a reasonable and accountable manner.

In terms of academic standing at Concordia, these same numbers speak of a different quality. In fact, the make-up of Concordia's student population has continued to change and adjust itself over the last 3 years. Among its four faculties, Arts & Science continues to enjoy 55% of the student population, JMSB currently holds 19% of the student population (as compared to 20% three years ago), Engineering has increased its student population to 18% (from 10 - 11%), and Fine Arts has decreased to 9% (from 10 - 11%).

The Chair maintains his position that it would be in the University's best interest if the Faculty of Arts & Science were to split into 3 faculties as follows: Science, Social Science and Humanities. If so, Concordia's academic standing would have a total of 5 faculties of the same size, with Fine Arts retaining its 9% student population. This structure would represent a more reasonable academic interaction rather than having one faculty lumped in the middle.

The Chair confirmed that enrollment growth has stopped completely in the categories of undergraduate programs (with FTE's of -14), and Master's of Engineering (with FTE's of -20). The largest growth has occurred in PhD enrollment (with FTE's of +74), representing 387 PhD students this year. The total head count in the Faculty is 6923 students.

The Faculty maintains its prominent position in terms of graduate student population within the University, as per the following distribution: 47% of all PhD students, 48% of all Master's Research students, representing the most important academic standing; 36% of all Master's Course students and 40% of all graduate students at Concordia University.

The steady state of enrollment figures will probably entail the need to increase the faculty complement from 175 to 200 members, in order to provide supervision for graduate students.

New Building

Due to poor weather and the construction company's uncooperative management team, the structure of the New Building is currently 3 months behind schedule. The Chair assured Council members that everything possible will be done to prevent further delays. The Chair expressed that there has been a misunderstanding regarding the process of identifying new furniture and equipment for the wet labs. The inventory project needs to be completed by the end of March 2004. As a result, the Chair stressed the importance of having professors identify the needs of their labs, specifically in terms of cabinets and benches. The Chair suggested that professors visit the new labs in the Science Building at Loyola to determine whether the equipment there would be suited for the engineering labs.

Teaching Loads

Teaching loads will continue to be reviewed in order to respond to the increase in graduate supervision and the call made to each department to decrease their teaching commitments.

New Faculty Members

Each respective department will continue to be involved in the ongoing process of hiring new faculty members. The Chair mentioned that the Faculty can neither slack nor rush to hire professors beyond a certain level of acceptance.

Graduate Studies

The Chair re-iterated his priority to address the quality of graduate studies. He has begun to address this issue by sitting on the Committee of Graduate Studies in the Department of Mechanical and Industrial Engineering. Subsequently, the Faculty will need to establish a niche for ENCS at Concordia in order for it to be recognized as one of the best engineering schools in Canada.

4.

Undergraduate Curriculum Changes (ECFC Doc. 2004-01-01)

In the absence of Dr. Lynch, Dr. Pugh introduced **ECFC Document 2004 -01-01** regarding the Confirmation of Originality Forms and proposed that Council adopt these documents as faculty policy. MIE and ECE have already adopted the forms as policy at the departmental level.

The purpose of the Originality Forms are twofold: (1) its pedagogical nature reinforces the ethical aspects of the engineering profession when submitting coursework and (2) from an administrative perspective, the forms serve as a tool to remind students that coursework being submitted has not been plagiarized, thus reducing the number of 'accidental' cases.

Motion *That Originality Forms set out in ECFC Document 2004-01-01 be adopted*
2004-01-03 *by Council as faculty policy for various coursework submitted by ENCS*
 students (M.O. Ahmad, R. Dssouli)

As per the following, a discussion ensued among faculty members before the above-mentioned motion was passed.

Dr. Krishnan: Is of the opinion that the forms are an excellent idea and required in order to have a unified approach with regards to plagiarism. Since he prefers using a simplified form, a sample copy of a Pledge Form was distributed to all Council members. The form captures the same spirit while allowing the student to either sign or explain why he does not agree to sign. Dr. Radhakrishnan asked the assembly if the Dept. of CS can adopt this document as their own form.

Dr. Pugh: Legal Counsel has reviewed the forms and feels they are good documents to use. Although not indicated on the forms, he believes that students are in their right to strike out an item(s) that does not apply to them and annotate what is required. In order to facilitate implementation and usage, 'generic' forms were designed and are available on the ENCS faculty website. The purpose behind these forms was to address most of the concerns professors have without having to obtain a specific form for each course. However, the content/format of the forms can certainly be reviewed on a yearly basis.

Dr. Howe: Has seen the number of code cases increase over the last 3 years from 6 in 2001; to 12 in 2002; up to 28 in 2003. Therefore, she inquired if forms were designed for the School of Graduate Studies, as well.

Dr. Pugh: Although the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee has brought the forms forward, there is no mention that their use is restricted to undergraduate courses only.

Dr. Vatistas: Agrees with using the forms at the undergraduate level. However, simple forms are preferable. According to his experience, many foreign, graduate students do not have experience with quoting reference material or producing reports. Since the School of Graduate Studies tries plagiarism cases, Dr. Howe was asked to provide her opinion with regards to implementing the Originality Forms at the graduate level.

Dr. Howe: Stated that the forms are quite detailed in explaining what is proper and ethical behaviour. Therefore, if these documents can serve to reinforce appropriate behaviour, then she commends this initiative.

Dr. Hanna: Serves on the Senate Hearing Committee. Based on 60% of the cases heard, there is a lack of understanding with regards to plagiarism. In order to reduce the number of plagiarism cases, he agrees to adopt these forms for every course and include them with the course outline.

Dr. Moselhi: These forms received favourable support at BCEE's departmental meeting. Their student rep was also in favour as it was felt that the act of cheating would be repeated if gone unpunished. Therefore, the documents were adopted on an experimental basis for 2 courses and students/faculty members have been requested to provide their feedback.

Dr. Opatrny: The spirit behind the forms is appropriate in order to deter cheating. However, he feels that the forms may be a little too detailed and therefore, counterproductive. Also, the Agreement seems complex and feels that some students would need to consult a lawyer before signing them. Broader-based forms would therefore be preferable.

Dr. Hoa: Suggested the use of one form in order to avoid confusion and to adopt a form that can be tailored to both undergraduate and graduate-level courses.

Dr. Krishnan: The purpose integrated in these forms pertains to (1) educating students on plagiarism and (2) having them practice or apply what they have learned. By reading the forms, the students should be able to understand what plagiarism is. However, they will not necessarily take the time to review all 10 items before signing the Agreement. Also, students don't have the option to strike out whatever statement(s) does not apply in their case. In view of the above, Dr. Radhakrishnan has difficulty accepting such forms and making them compulsory for students across the faculty.

Dr. Shiri: Although some textbooks have solution manuals, the forms do not mention whether a student can refer to the manuals without being penalized. Also, for courses requiring collaborative learning, it would be difficult to determine which student is responsible for working on what section and as such, how to designate the person accountable for the work being submitted. In addition, he feels that the statements on the forms are difficult to follow. Most importantly, Dr. Shiri suggested that students be informed on plagiarism – this can be done via a brief video presentation introduced on the first day of classes.

Dr. Fancott: Forms encompass an educational and operational aspect. He agrees with the educational aspect of the forms. Also, instructors should be allowed to use an abridged form specific to a course, depending on the nature of individual assignments. Consequently, the students should be allowed a certain leeway, as provided by the instructor.

Zmeureanu: Has volunteered to use the originality forms for course 202. Based on his experience, the number of plagiarism cases were reduced. However, he suggests that only one form be used across the faculty.

The Chair: The forms should serve two purposes: (1) educate students on plagiarism and (2) have students pledge their signature as an act of his/her honesty. In this regard, the Chair is of the opinion that a general pledge form should be designed, including a summary of general rules – *i.e. I will write all assignments individually; I will not refer to solution manuals...etc.*

Dr. Pugh: Before voting on *Motion 2004-01-03*, Dr. Pugh re-iterated the major issues discussed:

- Forms were designed as a legal document in the event students use this tool to raise a legal issue
- The same form should be adopted faculty-wide
- Forms should be feasible for both undergraduate and graduate-level courses
- Although students follow course ENCS 282 on plagiarism (usually in their 2nd year of study), forms should serve as an educational tool to inform students on plagiarism and obtain a pledge of their honesty
- Forms should be reviewed to include the option for a student to strike out a statement not applicable in their case
- For collaborative work, the Report Form should be used; Lab Report Forms can be used for both individual and group work; the Assignment Form is to be used for individual work only.

Dr. Lam: Since forms require some improvement, he suggested that Council meets again before a motion is passed. Also suggested that instructors use the 'Space Reserved for Instructors' to write general instructions/guidelines or outline points that don't apply to a particular course.

G. Papadakis: Since group work is eminent in the classroom as well as in industry, this student rep from MIE suggested that a professor use discretion to provide their students with some leeway as to what is/is not permissible in terms of plagiarism.

J. Daigle: BCE student rep asked what the section reserved for instructors is used for. According to Dr. Pugh, markers can enter their marks or provide their comments in this space.

Motion 2004-01-04 *That Originality Forms set out in ECFC Document 2004-01-01 be tabled until the next Council meeting so that Faculty members can revise the document, as per the issues discussed.*

Vote: carried unanimously

5. **Ratification of the Search Committee for the Selection of Chair of the Department of Building, Civil and Environmental Engineering**

Motion 2004-01-05 *That the following members elected as Faculty Representatives on the Search Committee for the selection of Chair of the Department of Building, Civil and Environmental Engineering be ratified by Council (T. Fancott, O. Moselhi)*

Dr. N. Esmail (Dean & Chair)
Dr. R. Dssouli (Dean-appointed Rep.)
Dr. A.M. Hanna (Faculty Rep. from BCEE)
Dr. M. Poorooshasb (Faculty Rep. from BCEE)
Dr. M. Zabeeruddin (Faculty Rep. from BCEE)
Dr. R. Bhat (Faculty Rep. from MIE)
Dr. C. Rajalingham (Part-time Faculty Rep.)
Ms. Anik Teasdale-St-Hilaire (Graduate Student Rep.)
Ms. Elisa Martínez Avilés (Undergraduate Student Rep.)

Vote: carried unanimously

6. **Ratification of the Search Committee for the Selection of Chair of the Department of Computer Science**

Motion *That the following members elected as Faculty Representatives on the Search*
2004-01-06 *Committee for the selection of Chair of the Department of Computer Science*
be ratified by Council (T. Radhakrishnan, R. Dssouli)

Dr. N. Esmail (Dean & Chair)
Dr. V.S. Hoa (Dean-appointed Rep.)
Dr. W. Atwood (Faculty Rep. from CS)
Dr. S. Bergler (Faculty Rep. from CS)
Dr. J. Opatrny (Faculty Rep. from CS)
Dr. M. Debbabi (Faculty Rep. from CIISE)
Dr. G. Abinader (Part-time Faculty Rep.)
Mr. Mingqian Ren (Graduate Student Rep.)
Mr. Frédéric Rioux (Undergraduate Student Rep.)


Vote: carried unanimously

7. **Other Business**

There was no other business to report.

8. **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 3:00 p.m.


Mary Di Pietrantonio
Secretary of Council